MISSIONARY ANNALS

ROBERT MOFFAT

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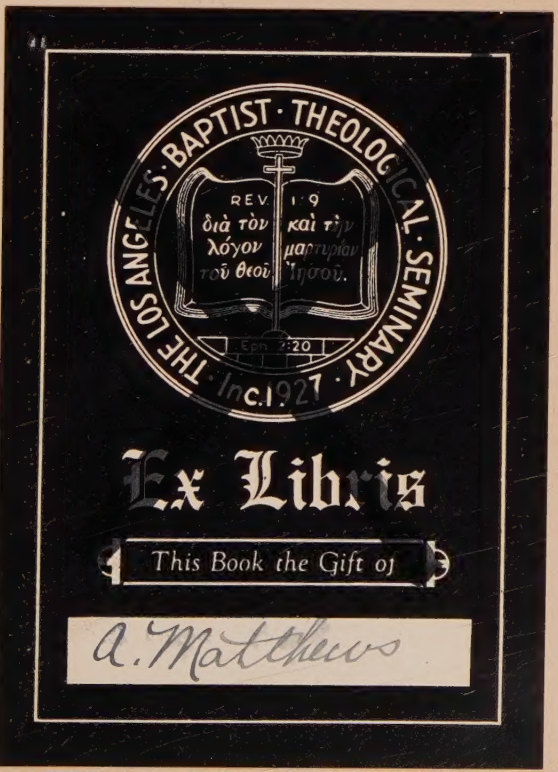
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MISSIONARY ANNALS.

(*A SERIES.*)

MEMOIR OF

ROBERT MOFFAT,

MISSIONARY TO SOUTH AFRICA,

1817 TO 1870.

BY

M. L. WILDER.

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ROBERT MOFFAT.

Born December 21st, 1795. Died August 10th, 1883.

Brief notice this of the beginning and ending of a life, such as might be placed after any name; but what of the years that span between these dates?

I.

BIRTH—BOYHOOD—SCHOOL-DAYS.

ROBERT MOFFAT, the subject of this condensed memoir, for nearly fifty-four years a missionary of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, in South Africa—a period embraced between the years 1817 and 1870—was born in Ormiston, East Lothian, Scotland, December 21st, 1795.

Like many who have become great in the service of God, he was born in a humble home, and was, as the world judges, of humble parentage; nevertheless he came of a sturdy, honest, pious Scotch ancestry. Of children, beside himself, there were four sons and two daughters. From Ormiston, at the age of two years, he was removed to Portsoy, from

whence, before long, his father moved his family again, this time to Carronshore, where was Moffat's home till he left the parental roof to seek his own livelihood.

Naturally the advantages afforded by his home were very limited. His first school experience was in the parish school of Carronshore, where, to begin with, his only text-book was the shorter catechism, with the alphabet on the title-page, through which, as well as through the more difficult lessons between the covers of that little book, he confesses to have been sometimes helped by the master's rod—not then having any special love for study, as afterward; being rather attracted by the charms of the sea, to which he actually ran away when very young, and on whose tossing waves he remained, with the permission of his parents, given by the advice of the friendly captain, with whom he had embarked, till several narrow escapes from severe injury, if not death, quite disgusted him with a sailor's life.

Once more settled upon land, he was placed in a school more pleasing to him; where writing and book-keeping were the advertised studies, but where ambitious youths, able to pay for such advantages, could, out of the regular school hours, be instructed in astronomy, geography, and higher mathematics. By attention to the instructions given others, and by the aid of an elder brother, belonging to this advanced class, Moffat gained a fair knowledge of these branches. It was well he did, for with the one short term of six months, at this school, his school days ended.

II.

EARLY IMPRESSIONS—HIS MOTHER—STARTS FOR HIMSELF—DESIRES A BETTER EDUCATION—LEAVES HOME—A PROMISE—TRUE TO HOME TRAINING—"LEIGH HIGH."

THOUGH not a professed Christian in childhood, it is evident from remarks of his own, in after life, that the boy's mind often dwelt upon spiritual things while he was quite young; as would be natural in a home where God was constantly and reverentially worshipped, and where the children were early taught, not only out of the Bible, but its very words.

His mother was a woman of more than usual piety, for even a Scotch home of that day. She was an intelligent woman, who, in spite of meagre opportunities, kept herself informed regarding the greater movements in the world; especially regarding spiritual movements, taking a lively interest in all missionary enterprises, then in their infancy.

By his mother was Robert Moffat's religious life shapen, and from her lips, seated about the cheery fire, on long winter evenings, knitting with his brothers and sisters—boys knit then, in Scotland, as well as girls,—did he first hear that there were heathen in the world, and of the efforts of Christians to send them the knowledge of a Savior who could raise them, socially and spiritually, out of their base degradation.

At fourteen years of age young Moffat became a self-sup-

porting member of the family, being then apprenticed to learn gardening. His master was hard with the boys in his employ, working them early and late, as well as furnishing them sparingly with food.

It was then, when shut off from the opportunity of gaining it, that Robert Moffat began to appreciate, and desire a liberal education, and he did occasionally manage his work so as to be able to attend an evening class, where he began the study of Latin, and also gained some ideas regarding applied geometry. During this apprenticeship he learned to use blacksmith's tools, of such value to him in his after work. Here, also, he became somewhat skilled on the violin, a source of rest and pleasure to him in the lonely wilds of his African home.

When sixteen years old a decided change took place in his life. He left Scotland for Cheshire, England, where he again engaged in gardening, an occupation carried on extensively near all large centres, as now.

When about to part from his wise mother, she elicited from him a solemn promise to read a chapter daily, from the Bible. When the promise had been given, she said:

"Now, I shall return home with a happy heart..... O, my son, read much in the New Testament. Read much in the Gospels, the blessed Gospels. Then you cannot well go astray. If you pray, the Lord himself will teach you."

It was when in the midst of Godless strangers that young Moffat saw his mother's wisdom in binding him by a promise that, at the time of her urging it, he thought quite useless, as amid the surroundings of his own home he had been in the habit of reading his Bible, and praying.

Very early in this, his first journey out into the world, he was called upon to stand by his home training, which he did

bravely, by refusing to take a Sunday coach, though it threw him out of the company of several pleasant traveling companions, and brought ridicule upon him.

"High Leigh" in Cheshire, the estate of one Mr. Leigh, was now to be his home. Here Robert Moffat found himself in better surroundings, and with much more time at his own command, than when with his former employer, and Mr. and Mrs. Leigh, who interested themselves in their servants individually, soon learning the bent of the new comer's mind, urged him on in the studies to which they saw him inclined.

III.

BECOMES A CHRISTIAN—DISAPPOINTED FRIENDS—ZEAL AND JOY—GREAT DESIRE—GOD'S LEADINGS—HINDERANCES—NEW HOME—ACCEPTED.

SHORTLY after coming to "High Leigh" Moffat fell in with some earnest Christians of the Wesleyan Methodist denomination; and it was in special meetings being held by them that the arrow of conviction entered his soul, and after a terrible struggle he yielded himself to the influences of his home training brought to his remembrance and pressed upon his heart by the prayers and labors of his new friends, and became a Christian when about twenty years of age.

To know that he had become a Methodist, then a thoroughly despised sect, was good news to neither his employer nor his parents. The former gave up all interest in him. The latter tried to be resigned to the fact of a child of theirs forsaking Calvinism,—the faith of all their fore fathers.

Moffat's religious zeal was unbounded. In his enthusiastic joy in Christ he wished to, and expected to bring many of the unsaved to Him; thinking he need only to tell them what Christ had done for his soul, of the great beauties he found in Him; of his wonderful love and sacrifice, to see them flock to Him. Just here he had his first glimpse of the hardness of men's hearts and stood shocked in the presence of their bold unconcern regarding spiritual things.

As he grew in his Christian life, an intense desire to serve God in some marked manner took possession of him. How to so serve God, when, or where, were questions constantly on his mind. While thus desiring and questioning, by chance, it would seem, by Providence really, he was led to hear of a missionary convention being held in Manchester. Such conventions were occasions of much note in that beginning of missionary work, and large placards announcing the meeting, with its speakers, were pasted in all available places. Before one of these placards Robert Moffat was held by the spirit of God, till, as a missionary of the cross he saw *his* way of serving God, and from the moment he gave himself to the work no earthly consideration tempted him from it, though some very keen tests were brought to bear upon him.

How to become a missionary was the next perplexing question. His education, he knew, had not been sufficient to fit him for such work. To pass the critical examination required of the candidates, demanded a liberal education, and an especial ability to instruct out of the Scriptures, and so many were those constantly offering themselves as missionaries, that the societies having the work in charge, could confine themselves to those best able to pass the required examination.

Nevertheless after much hesitation, and with trembling, he offered himself to the London Missionary Society, (organized the year of his birth) through a Mr. Roby; a person intimately connected with the cause of missions. After waiting in doubt some time for an answer, he learned that his services were refused. But by this time Mr. Roby had become so greatly interested in Moffat, and so impressed with the earnestness of his desire, that he encouraged him to hope that the society would change its mind regarding

him, promising to exert himself in his behalf, at the same time advising him to leave "High Leigh," and come to Manchester, that he might be under his care in preparing for missionary work.

Truly when God calls one into any line of work for Him, he opens the ways into that work. Robert Moffat accepted Mr. Roby's advice, and one Mr. Smith, an ardent advocate of missions, hearing of the young man, made room for him in his nursery garden, near Manchester. This was all a step in God's plan for Moffat, for this very situation led to the important end of getting for him a most helpful wife, who was none other than the only daughter of this Mr. Smith.

In God's good time, and when Robert Moffat was better fitted for the place, the London Society resolved to accept him as one of their missionaries. At once he left his situation with Mr. Smith and, under Mr. Roby, devoted all his time to preparing himself, as well as he could, during the few months that were to pass before his departure for the foreign field for his future work.

IV.

PARTINGS—GOES WITHOUT A WIFE—SET APART—A LONG VOYAGE—DETENTIONS—GOOD USE OF TIME.

IT was no light trial for his parents, now advancing in years, to consent to give their son up to the unknown evils of the heathen world. It was to them like taking a final farewell of their dear boy. Then Scotland and Africa seemed further apart than they do to-day, furnished as we are with our swift steamers, our telegraphs, our railroads. The dangers besetting a missionary's life and the sacrifices he was called upon to make were far greater than they are to-day. Yet they dared not forbid his going, when he came to them for their consent, lest they should be planting themselves in the way of the Lord's work.

In God's kindness both of those parents were spared to welcome that son home again, after his first twenty-three years in Africa.

There was another parting equally hard for young Moffat to endure. Mr. and Mrs. Smith had consented to the betrothal of their daughter Mary to Robert, and he had hoped to marry her and take her with him to his work; and Miss Smith, whose heart was full of zeal in behalf of missions, would gladly have gone anywhere with him, but her parents would not then give their consent to the marriage. To both this was a disappointment, but especially keen was it to Moffat, who, besides the other hardships he realized he must endure, would be burdened with that of extreme loneliness.

On the 30th of September, 1816, with eight others, in Surry Chapel, he was ordained to missionary work. At first he had been selected for Polynesia, but afterwards was included with those, four beside himself, to be sent to South Africa, the other four being sent to the South Sea Islands.

Perhaps, as indicative of his entire consecration to this work of missions, it might here be said, that had his services been finally refused by the organized societies, he had determined to sail away, of his own accord, to some lonely island, or distant shore, and there preach Christ to the perishing inhabitants. Such devotion to God's cause is never, other things being equal, as in this case, overlooked by God.

October 18th of this same year, the party of missionaries embarked with one Captain Findlay, in the sailing vessel Alacrity, but it was not until January 17th, 1817, eighty-six days after starting, that they landed in Cape Town, Cape Colony, South Africa.

From this point they had hoped to proceed, without delay, to their several stations of labor; but for some nonsensical reasons Mr. Moffat and a companion, both appointed to Namaqualand, beyond the borders of the Colony, were prohibited from going on for several months, by the Governor. His Excellency's chief reason being that he understood Namaqualand to be the gathering place of runaway slaves and criminals, and that the London Missionary Society, which had before supported a missionary there, had refused to force slaves back to their masters, as well as refused to have anything to do with the tracking of criminals.

In vain did the missionaries plead that it was not to bear a part in the government difficulties of Cape Colony they

had come to South Africa, but to try to introduce Christian civilization into the wilds beyond the colony.

Several months must elapse before news of this detention could reach the London Society, and the waiting missionaries receive instructions as to a future course of action. But, with Mr. Moffat, at least, the time was by no means lost. He retired to a town back from the coast, and devoted himself to acquiring the Dutch language, not that spoken by the natives among whom he was to labor, but spoken by the rich, numerous farmers, through whose possessions the missionaries of Namaqualand must constantly pass on all tours of importance. To be able to converse with these farmers, in their own tongue, was of great advantage to the missionaries, and rendered them much less liable to unfair dealings in the matter of the supplies they were so frequently obliged to purchase of them.

At this time, Mr. Moffat also made his first extended missionary trip, and got his first glimpse of heathen Africa, studying its physical geography, as well as its moral depravity,—riding, with a resident evangelist, nearly seven hundred miles. In all his spare moments he was picking up a knowledge of whatever came in his way, and what he then learned of the people and their needs, was of much after use to him.

V.

PERMISSION GRANTED—REACHES HIS NEW HOME—PIONEERS—A *Kraal*—CATTLE *vs.* WIVES—COUNTRY AND TRIALS.

BEFORE the expected instructions from England could reach the missionaries, the Governor, under the pressure of influences brought to bear upon him by certain people of authority, reconsidered his decision, and granted Mr. Moffat, and Mr. and Mrs. Kitchingman, his companions for Namaqualand, though intended for a different station from his, permission to advance to their places of labor.

Therefore in September, nearly a year after leaving England, they gladly started with their ox teams away from the Colony; to be guided over the unknown way, by the missionary Ebner, who had been, for sometime, laboring in Namaqualand, at a station known as Afrikaner's Kraal, on the west coast of Africa, north of the Orange river, and between the 23° and 28° of south latitude; where was to be Mr. Moffat's home for the present, with a people known to us as Hottentots—people who had grown suspicious of all white faces, because of the many evils they had received at the hands of wild sailors, or those equally lawless, who had, or did, from time to time, visit their coast.

Before the present missionary, Mr. Ebner, two devoted men by the name of Albrecht had been pioneer missionaries at that point, and painfully distressing had been their

experiences, ending in their own deaths, as well as that of the wife of one of the brothers.

Perhaps the word kraal, pronounced quite like our word *crawl*, as I took it from an African Missionary's lips, should be explained. It is a European term, applied to a large circular enclosure, in which some feet from the outside, is another circular enclosure. Between these two fences are built the huts of the chief, and his head men; many or few according to the number of each man's wives; each wife, with her children, having her own home. The large space inside the second enclosure is the gathering place of the cattle. Cattle and wives are the riches of the natives, the former being held as most valuable, however.

The limits of this memoir will not permit of an extended description of the country through which that journey took the little company. Be it remembered that to-day much of Africa is but a trackless region, with no conveniences for travel. What must all have been over seventy years ago?—Desolate and harder of access than we can think.

The way led over stones and burning sands, over barren hills into parts where there was often little water for man and beast, and that impure, frequently where there was none at all to be procured, while a wilting sun drove its scorching rays into the flesh. There were dangers from wild beasts, the loss of sheep needed for daily food, and of the working oxen, by death or wanderings away; trouble with lazy, dishonest servants, night traveling, swollen rivers to ford at great risk, and many other hardships during nearly four tedious months, for it was not until January 26th, 1818, that Mr. Moffat reached the Kraal of Chief Afrikaner.

VI.

CHIEF AFRIKANER—MEETS MOFFAT COOLLY—LEFT ALONE AT THE KRAAL—ENCOURAGEMENTS—WINS AFRIKANER'S ESTEEM—NOT THE PLACE FOR SUCCESSFUL WORK—A DISAPPOINTING JOURNEY—DECIDES TO MOVE HEADQUARTERS.

BEFORE going further with Mr. Moffat himself, it will be quite proper, just here to devote a little space to this Chief Afrikaner, who, during all the stay of that missionary with this people, was intimately connected with, and of great help in all his work.

In a civilized country, as a civilized man, Afrikaner would have been remarkable. In his own country, after Christ entered his heart, he was a remarkable man. Before that, however, he had been a terror, out of whose path all sought to flee for safety. He was an outlaw, for whose head, on account of numerous cruel deeds, there was even at this time an offer made by the government of one hundred pounds sterling.

He was a chief by birth, now the Christian chief of part of Namaqualand, and had really been driven to much of the boldly cruel life he had led by the injustice and dishonesty of those calling themselves not only civilized, but Christians.

First under the teachings of one of the Albrechts, Afrikaner had been caused to think of a better life. Under Mr. Ebner, he was baptized, but for reasons, for which Mr. Ebner was partially to blame, the latter never gained Afrikan-

er's confidence or affection, and with him, he was never the help to the cause of Christ, he soon proved himself with Mr. Moffat, who won his heart entirely.

At first he met the new missionary coolly, but shortly that wonderful power over men, characteristic to a marked degree in Moffat in after life, seemed to touch the chief's heart, and he welcomed him, and bade his women bring material, and proceed to build him a house at once.

In *half an hour*, Moffat tells us, they presented him with a finished structure, made in a hemispherical shape, out of slender poles and mats, wherein he lived for six months quite comfortably, though not always protected from rain or dust, or the almost unbearable heat of the sun; to say nothing of unwelcome visits from hungry dogs, or an occasional serpent.

Soon after reaching the kraal, or town, the ill-will existing between Mr. Ebner and the people, came so markedly to the surface, as to render it best for Mr. Ebner to leave the station, which he did, removing to Warm Bath, leaving Moffat quite alone.

Very pathetically does the young, inexperienced missionary write of the lonely days which followed. But God did not allow discouragement to take hold upon him. His day-school was soon well attended, and to the morning and evening religious services the chief began to come regularly, and to manifest a growth in the Christian life that astonished Mr. Moffat. He also began to help his work forward, by insisting upon his people adopting some of the reforms suggested by their teacher; such as washing their persons, and their very dirty wrappings, hardly to be called clothing, and wearing such dress as should at least render them decent before each other.

He furthermore exercised a watchful oversight over Mof-

fat himself, seeing that he enjoyed all the comforts the comfortless place afforded. On one occasion he presented him with two cows, which Moffat tells us, saved him "many a hungry night," as we are prepared to believe when we remember that his salary, and his only income at this time, was but twenty-five pounds a year. Two cows seem a good many for one lone man; but the cows in South Africa, it is said, give very little milk. This was certainly true of the poor cows depending on the barren pastures of Namaqualand for their supply of food.

The peculiarities of this people, together with the barrenness of the country all about the Kraal, soon convinced Mr. Moffat that this spot never could be made the centre of successful missionary work. Afrikaner agreed with him on this point, and having long desired to move his people to a region of water and grass, offered to accompany the missionary on an exploring expedition; to find, if possible, a place combining all the desired qualities.

After repairing his one crippled wagon, or in reality making a new one, first making the tools with which to do the work, then mending several old guns, a party sufficiently large to protect itself from the dangers of the way, set forth and traveled many miles up into the north country, only to find all that country quite as desolate and uninviting as their present location.

Mr. Moffat worked on there a few months longer, making a year in all, during which time he saw no person of his own race, or heard a word of his own language, only as he, himself, uttered it. Then he determined to leave this field for Bechwanaland, (often spelled Bechuana) a portion of which he had already visited at the suggestion of Afrikaner.

This move was not to be made, however, until after a

journey to Cape Colony, whither Mr. Moffat, and Afrikaner, must go for supplies, to be procured no nearer home. It was the first time in years that the Chief had ventured into the presence of the government, but now, when he appeared he was so new, so different a creature in Christ, instead of being arrested and perhaps hanged as he thought he might be, he was fully pardoned and kindly entertained, as Mr. Moffat's friend, during his stay at the Colony.

All along the route to the Colony, Mr. Moffat took great pleasure in holding this chief up to the people as an object lesson, proving the wonderful power of the Gospel of Christ, properly applied, to change man's nature. So sweet, mild, and lovely was all of Afrikaner's conduct, that doubting men would ask, "Are you really Chief Afrikaner, that dreaded Afrikaner?"

VII.

ROMANTIC EVENTS—A BRAVE GIRL—MEETS MISS SMITH—IS MARRIED.

QUITE like a romance reads the next chapter in Robert Moffat's life. As already stated, before leaving England he had become engaged to marry a lady named Miss Mary Smith, whose parents would not give her to him when he set forth into the work he felt called of God to enter.

The position of those parents, sincere Christians though they were, is not to be too severely criticised by any one not tried in a like manner. Mary was their only daughter; a rather beautiful girl; a very bright, well educated girl; as much to them as such daughters are to parents to-day; and they saw for her, as the wife of the African missionary, nothing but trials and denials; not to mention the terrible dangers they were sure awaited both man and woman in the degradation of South Africa.

When the young people had parted in England, they had confidently looked forward to a union in the future, but during these two years in Africa, even that hope had been taken from Moffat, as Miss Smith wrote bidding him cherish it no longer, because her parents were growing more firm in their purpose to refuse to allow her to take a place by his side in his present work, and his duties to God would not allow him to give up that work simply that he might satisfy the selfish yearnings of his heart. Although the engage-

ment was not broken formally, he, now, had no hope of marrying his loved one.

Perhaps to test Mr. Moffat, as he did his servants of old, God permitted this great disappointmet to come into his life, and when he saw how strictly true he was to the vows made to Him, and when He had shown young Moffat how He could uphold him in disappointments hard to endure, He gave him all he desired; for just before starting for the Colony the glad news that Mary Smith was to come to him, reached him.

Words of her own, written to the parents of her future husband, will explain the change in the purposes of her own parents—she wrote.

"—— After two years and a half of most painful anxiety I have, through the tender mercies of God, obtained permission of my dear parents to proceed next spring, to join your dear son in his arduous work. This is by no means what I expected a week ago; but God's thoughts are not as our thoughts. When He arises, every mountain flows down in His presence. He has the hearts of all men in His hands. and can turn them as the rivers of waters. So He has done with regard to my parents.....they both yesterday calmly resigned me into the hands of the Lord, declaring they durst no longer withhold me."

Great was the joy of Robert Moffat on receiving this news, and both he and Miss Smith recognizing in the matter, an answer to their many prayers, consecrated themselves anew to the work of missions.

To part from her aged parents, perhaps forever, was a serious trial to the loving young girl. To take the long sea voyage alone to South Africa was a brave step; both proving her strong convictions of duty, and her love for young Moffat.

So irregular then was the sailing of vessels for Cape Town,

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that not till near the end of August, 1819, could Miss Smith take passage for Africa. During the perilous, tedious trip she was blessed with the companionship of a minister and his wife, going to one of the Dutch churches in Cape Colony.

In the following December Robert Moffat had the pleasure of welcoming her at Cape Town landing; though he had feared he must return to his work, leaving a stranger to await the tardy ship; which would have been the case, had not tribal wars crossed the path he and his companions were to have traversed.

On the 17th of December they were married at Cape Town, in St. George's church, and early in 1820 started toward the home where so many years of life, and united labor were spent. Therefore, hereafter, in thinking of Robert Moffat, let us think, also, of the brave, earnest woman at his side, enduring what he endured, and always quite as much of a missionary as he was, save in some of the long itinerating journeys, undertaken by him into the wilderness regions.

VIII.

NEW HOME—PEOPLE—FIRST CHILD—GRIQUA STATION EXTINCT.

WHILE at the Colony, quite unexpectedly, Mr. Moffat had been approached by those interested in the mission work of Bechwanaland, and urged to go on to that land at once, and assume control of the work there. That his eyes had been turned in that direction already we know, but he had thought to go simply as a teacher and preacher, and not to go till Afrikaner should be ready to move his people there too, steps towards this change, and the purchase of land, having been taken already by Afrikaner. In planning to leave the desolate region of their present home, Mr. Moffat had never thought to leave those people behind him, they were his first love, and had grown very dear to him.

But as those having the Bechwana work in charge urged, and pleaded, Mr. Moffat talked the matter over with Chief Afrikaner, and he also advised that Moffat accept the position, promising to follow at once, with the missionary's belongings still at the kraal, and soon to follow with his people. His first visit, with the goods, he made almost as soon as the Moffats reached their station, but was by death, prevented from carrying out his latter design.

Therefore it was that the Moffats turned their faces more directly north, on leaving the colony, than northwest, as Mr

Moffat had expected. The station towards which they now journeyed, encountering quite as many hardships as when on the way to Namaqualand, was called the Kuruman, and is to-day one of the few stations that has survived the changes in South Africa.

For one of the many needless objections constantly confronting the missionary in those days, and impeding his work, the party was not permitted to press on to the Kuruman, but obliged to content itself with a location in Griqua Town, about one hundred miles south of Kuruman, sometimes then called Lattakoo.

At Griqua Town Mr. Moffat found a people doing little credit to the teachings of former missionaries, and some, it must be said, had done little credit to the cause of Christ. The people were yet sunk in ignorance, superstitions and given to every vice; a marked trait among all of them being stealing, and that in the boldest manner, because of which the missionaries went through severe experiences. Their cattle, household goods, the very food out of the cooking pots were appropriated with the greatest of impudent coolness.

Even in the little church gathered, there was much corruption—so few who pretended to make their "garments white in the blood of the lamb" that there was little difference between its membership and those outside of it. It seemed to Mr. Moffat as if it must ever be "line upon line," with here much, and there more instructions, in order to bring any up to a life above their sinful practices.

While here the first child was born to Mr. and Mrs. Moffat. Their daughter Mary, who became the wife of the great missionary explorer Livingstone.

This Griqua mission was not of long life, the people scattering as the land became possessed by the whites, and

the tribes belonging to it joining themselves to the communities about them. It is to be hoped that of all the seed sown, some sprang up and bore fruit. It never had an encouraging record of its own

IX.

BECHWANALAND PROPER—KURUMAN STATION—ITS PEOPLE—DRESS—CUSTOMS — BELIEF — RAIN-MAKERS—HINDERANCE TO THE WORK—OUTSIDE WORK.

IN the year 1821 the Moffats were allowed to go on to Lattakoo, or what we shall more properly call Kuruman, a name given by the river making fertile the country about it. Here they came in contact with the faithful missionary Robert Hamilton, for some time already a laborer at this station, a man of marked devotion, but not fitted to lead in a work of such importance as the Kuruman station promised to be. To the end of his useful, beautiful life, he aided Mr. Moffat in this place.

In Bechwanaland our interest will henceforth center; for there it was that Mr. Moffat spent half a century of his noble, notable life. The headquarters of that life during this period being the Kuruman Station, the beginning of which I will not here detail, Mr. Moffat in his "Labors and Scenes in South Africa," speaks minutely of it.

Of the people belonging to this station, and the surrounding country, it can be said that they were but little better than those found in Griqua Town, possessing many of their characteristics, and, if anything, turning a deafer ear to the Gospel so faithfully preached to them. The station is described as picturesque, but the heart of man as vile. No spiritual results, in the proper use of the words, had come from the labors already bestowed.

Here too, Mr. Moffat found the church in so sad a condition, that in order to cleanse it, he was obliged to reduce the number of its communicants to a mere fraction of what it had been.

True these people welcomed missionaries among them, but simply for the physical profit they brought with them. They were sufficiently intelligent to appreciate the white man's superiority, and wished to partake of its advantages, and missionaries were cheap instructors, very willing, persevering ones, from whom they could learn the use of tools, how to construct better houses to cultivate their little patches of grain, etc., in return for which they stole whatever of theirs they could lay their hands upon, ridiculed the spiritual truths they tried to impress upon their minds, and looked upon the missionary as rather beholden to them for the protection they afforded him, for they were possessed of the strange idea that all missionaries were criminals, hiding away from a pursuing justice. Nor could the missionaries disabuse their minds of this thought. What was there in them, or their country, they asked, so attractive, that white men should, of their free will, leave the civilization of their own land, and the advantages it afforded, of which the missionaries talked so much, and to which they urged them to rise, what but some motive of self-protection? When the missionaries made answer that it was an interest in their soul's salvation, they laughed the idea to scorn.

Of their native peculiarities we will speak briefly. Of their dress we can have but little to say, from the fact of there being so *very little* dress to speak of. Till manhood, or womanhood the skin kindly furnished by nature, was deemed an all sufficient covering. When grown up, a sort of apron was furnished to both boys and girls. Upon mar-

riage a skirt was usually added to the bride's outfit, and she shaved off all her hair, but a queer little tuft on top of her head.

Otherwise such of the body as chanced to be hidden, was hidden by ornaments made of shells, stones, bits of brass, or anything that could be strung or tied into necklaces, or bracelets, or leg ornaments; these decorations being as popular with men as with women.

In most tribes women were beasts of burden; cared for the crops, built the houses; did all the work except hunting and fishing. In some tribes, however, their position was equal to that of the men.

Old people, or the helpless, were usually put off, in lonely out of the way places, to die of starvation. Little children were frequently buried alive with their dead mothers, especially if the father was also dead, or had forsaken them. Mr. and Mrs. Moffat rescued and brought up two little girls who were about to be thus buried; as well as a little child Mrs. Moffat found hidden under a brush heap; attracted to the spot by the starving baby's piteous cries.

If possible death must not be allowed to take place in the homes; the corpse would pollute the hut forever; it was unclean; they would not touch it. Only the lowest classes could be hired to care for the dead. An instance is given of a son being obliged to remove the remains of his own mother. That he might not touch the body of her who had given him birth, and cherished him, and worked for him, he tied a rope around one of the legs, and dragged the body to its place of burial, in a heartless manner.

Of religion, properly speaking, they had none, but of beliefs, several, prominent among which was that in witchcraft, and they were very cruel to supposed bewitchers,

many an unfortunate innocent being put through tortures to death. As this was a convenient way of avenging any injury, real or supposed, frequently a man or woman got rid of an enemy by accusing that enemy of being a witch, from which accusation there was little hope of escape.

A few of the tribes had an indistinct belief in *some kind* of a supreme being, to whom in time of danger they made sacrifice of cattle, but it was in their Rain-makers that they centered their hopes and creeds.

The Bechwanas were terribly under the influence and power of these Rain-makers. These men were their doctors, their prophets, above all their sextons, not only seeing that their dead were buried away from them, but having power to cleanse their homes from the pollution of death, and to rid them of the power of witches, consequently they gave them the reverence that might have been given to a god. Their word was law and all sought to curry favor with them.

It need hardly be said that these Rain-makers, keen, shrewd men, many of them were, were enemies of the Christian missionary, whose teachings must undermine, if not entirely do away with their influence, (hence their livelihood) and naturally, in all ways they sought to prejudice the minds of the heathen against them.

If their arts and predictions failed and a glaring sun poured down upon a thirsty earth, instead of the longed for rain they had been brought to a town to make—as was usually the case, the blame was laid upon the missionaries, consequently the natives had frequent occasions to look upon those self-denying laborers as the cause of much of their poverty and disappointment. The presence of the missionary, something he had said or done, something he had in his house,

were all reasons sufficient to dissipate the clouds that had never appeared in the clear heavens.

Not long after settling at the Kuruman, Mr. Moffat had a severe experience with one of the most noted of these impostors, who had been brought to the station to relieve the great distress caused by the long absence of rain. For days his incantations and mysterious arts were tried in vain, the people obeying his every mandate. To account for his failure, he so decidedly blamed Mr. Moffat, also Mr. Hamilton, that at one time it seemed as if all the missionaries would be driven from the place. This God did not allow, but finally turned the tide of prejudice against the Rain-maker, who, because of conduct deemed unworthy, even by the natives, in one of so dignified a position, was himself obliged to leave the town.

With this man's departure, and after some very plain, serious talks from the missionaries, regarding such impostors, there began at the Kuruman, among the more intelligent of the natives, a wavering of their faith in the ability of such, or any class of men to control the wind or weather, and soon the superstition was virtually abandoned. This was a result greatly to the encouragement of the missionaries. A firm confidence in these Rain-makers had always been a barrier, impassable to the Gospel of Christ.

Another great hindrance to the influence of the Christian teachers was their inability to quickly get hold of, and use the native language. With no written system, they were dependent upon such help as the natives saw fit to give them; and Mr. Moffat tells us that the people enjoyed teaching them wrongly, because of the fun it caused to hear the missionaries blunderingly use the most absurd expressions,

when supposing they were imparting profound truths, or wishing to give serious instructions.

Even the interpreters would willingly distort, or render ridiculous the words of the Holy Scriptures, thus frequently destroying the impressions of a whole service. Beside, there was in the native language, an actual lack of proper words in which to express spiritual truth. Indeed it seemed for a time as if everything was against the prosecution of the Lord's cause at that station; and the almost discouraged missionaries worked on, supported only in the strength of the God for whom they were doing battle.

In conjunction with the station work Mr. Moffat, alternating with Mr. Hamilton, made Sunday tours into the adjoining country to hold religious services, sometimes collecting an audience by gifts of tobacco, often to see that audience scatter upon the opening sentences of the lesson he wished to impart to them; again to find the chief man of the kraal angry with him because he would not promise to come and make his home with his people,—it gave dignity to a community to possess a white teacher of its own—; or as on one or two occasions, to find another deeply insulted by the refusal to take, as an extra wife, perhaps his choicest daughter, thus making his return to those places a thing out of the question, or certainly a useless trouble, taken in wilting heat, over burning sands.

X.

War—Mantatees—Prompt Action—A Battle—Victory and Tears—Silver-lined Cloud.

AS if home trials were not sufficient to stay the way of the Lord, and to quite discourage His struggling servants, and to put further off the hoped for better times at the Kuruman, in the latter part of the year 1823 there broke out a serious native war, known to those concerned as the Mantatee Invasion.

These Mantatees were a lawless people of mixed blood, who went forth to plunder, and burn, and murder of their own ungoverned wills, when and where it best suited them. The news of their being abroad in the land sent a chill into every heart. For months previous to this conflict it had been rumored that they were on the move, but news was so uncertain, and correct information so hard to get at, as was natural where long stretches of uninhabited country lay between the towns of the different tribes, that not till fleeing refugees began to seek the protection of the Kuruman did Mr. Moffat really become alarmed, and rise to action.

To know what was to be known, and to see the extent of the reported invasion, he set forth to visit towns near the scene of conflicts. To his dismay he found that he had been slower in his movements than the dreaded enemy, who were even then, working their way to the station.

With all possible speed he turned homeward, fearing that before he could reach his family and people the Mantatees would be upon them, destroying, and murdering all in the place. But he was there with the sadly truthful news before them. To him the people flocked for advice and directions. Without delay, Mr. Moffat was put at the head of affairs by the united voices of all at the station.

It was a responsible position, but assumed in God's strength, and in behalf of all he held dear. His first step was to seek to strengthen the forces at the Kuruman, with aid from Griqua Town. None too soon was this step taken, for when the Griqua warriors reached them, the Mantatees were less than forty miles from the place.

That the foe should be kept at a distance from their homes, part of the army, perhaps a hundred armed men, headed by Mr. Moffat, and one Melville, a government commissioner from Griqua Town; both on horse-back; went forth to meet them, Mr. Moffat hoping to negotiate a peace with the enemy. But no mode of communication with them was encouraged, and a battle being imminent, the main force, still at the station, was sent for, and the next day witnessed a terrible fight, with poisoned arrows in the hands of the enemy, and guns in those of the defending party.

Moffat and Melville were not in the thick of the fight, being able to do their people better service by being near to direct, and encourage, and in rescuing the wounded from the cowardly attacks of straggling enemies. Once, certainly, during that day, Mr. Moffat would have been crushed by a blow from a Mantatee, but for the sure aim of a friend.

After much slaughter the day was won by the Bechwanas. The invaders retreated to trouble them no more; and Mr. Moffat's victorious army gathered itself together and returned

to the anxious ones at the station, taking with it many half-starved prisoners, forsaken by the Mantatees, mostly women and children.

But this very victory filled all hearts with fear. Other Mantatees might come down upon them to revenge the defeat of their friends. Indeed, rumors to this effect filled the air, till it was considered best to forsake the station for a time, and move down to more protected Griqua Town.

Such of their possessions as could be taken with them, the people carried, the remainder they buried, or hid as best they could. Mr. Moffat took his wife and children to this place of safety, but returned, himself, to the station, where he remained nearly alone, guarding and caring for the mission property.

Out of this cloud, dark as it seemed, came much that was favorable to the cause of Christ. In the eyes of the natives the missionaries appeared different men. Noble, unselfish men, who instead of forsaking them, as they might have done, and fleeing for their own safety, remained with, and saved them and theirs; for, to the cool energy, the generous courage, and prompt action of Mr. Moffat, seconded by that of Mr. Hamilton, did they acknowledge their deliverance from the hands of the cruel and powerful Mantatees, and though they did not then yield to the missionaries' God, they gave to the missionaries their affection, respect and confidence; all entering wedges for the cause, those men came among them to advance. Had the people been idolators, it is said, such was their gratitude, they might have tried to deify Mr. Moffat.

XI.

DANGER AGAIN—BRAVE MRS. MOFFAT—A DESIRED CHANGE—WAR AGAIN—UNEXPECTED ATTACK—VISITS THE CAPE—NEW SIGHTS AND IDEAS.

WHEN once more fairly settled in their own homes at the Kuruman, new dangers threatened the people, from a marauding party made up of run-away slaves and criminals, together with some of the baser natives of the country. News of their avowed intention of invading and sacking the Kuruman, reached the station where Mrs. Moffat was alone with the native inhabitants, her husband being many miles away, and Mr. Hamilton, also, elsewhere. But with a strong hand she assumed control of affairs, and by her courage and authority kept the people from forsaking the place, and at their duties, till the missionaries could return, when matters quieted down without the threatened invasion.

For some time Mr. Moffat had wished to move the centre of missionary operations from its present site, to a point eight miles above, which was in all ways a spot better fitted for the spread of the work, and the making of comfortable homes. In 1824 he was enabled to bring about this desired change. To the new location Mr. Hamilton was sent at once, while Mr. Moffat, now aided by a Mr. Hughes, remained at the old station to fittingly close the work there.

Hardly had the change been effected, before several tribal wars broke out, in one of which, most unexpectedly, the old station was invaded and almost destroyed, most of the people again fleeing for protection to Griqua Town. It was more than two years before quiet again reigned, and

the missionaries could go on steadily with their work. Then followed a long rest from native wars of nearly fifty years, interrupted only by the English invasion of Bechwanaland, an exploit needing much excusing, if at all excusable.

Just before establishing this new station, the Moffats visited Cape Colony, taking with them a young native prince, and his father's chief man, from a neighboring tribe, to both of whom this visit caused a series of revelations. In the first place it opened their eyes to the wonderful results of the white man's civilization, where it had had a chance to develop. In the next place, to the fact, that the missionaries were not friendless outlaws hiding from justice, for, very kindly, and in a marked manner were these missionaries received and entertained by even government officials, the natives likewise—being their companions.

And very grand was it all, in the eyes of the young prince. A ship lay in the harbor. It was a marvel to him. With difficulty could he and his companion, be tempted aboard of it.

"Was it alive?" "Did it eat?" "Did it sleep?" Equally curious were they about all the many things strange and new to them. To the missionaries they put the old question—

"Why do you leave all this," meaning all the benefits of white civilization, "and live with us?" And they began to think there must be some truth in the answer.

"Because we are interested in you, and your soul's salvation." This visit made these natives great men, in their own country; and the missionaries greater men, when they made their reports.

XII.

SETTLES AT UPPER STATION—TRIALS—PROGRESS—PROSPERITY—LOCUSTS.

IN 1826 Mr. Moffat joined Mr. Hamilton in the work of the new station, still the Kuruman, only in a better situation, being better watered and shaded, and more central for work than was the old station. Mr. Hamilton had been preparing for work, and, with Mr. Moffat's arrival, earnest, aggressive work was commenced. This year was one of trials to Mr. and Mrs. Moffat. A little son died. Mr. Moffat lost a favorite brother by death; Mrs. Moffat was called upon to mourn for her departed mother; but these events, giving them more in heaven to think of, knit their hearts more closely to their work.

It was also the most progressive year so far, in their work. By this time Mr. Moffat had mastered the native language, and now began to lay the foundation of a printed literature. His first effort was the production of a spelling-book, that was to have been immediately printed at the Cape, but which, by mistake, much to his disappointment, was sent on to England, causing a delay of many months. This was followed by a catechism and fragments of the Scriptures.

Material prosperity also began to come to the station. God opened the windows of heaven, and poured out the needed rains, till the earth once more brought forth abundantly. Marauders and straggling warriors disappeared, and even the invasion of the locusts in 1827 was not looked upon

as an affliction, though they did devour every green thing, for, in turn they furnished rich food for the natives.

In the night these greedy little creatures settle for rest. then it is that the natives go out and gather them in baskets by the millions. These they steam, then dry in the sun, afterwards winnow to clean of legs and wings and pack away for future use. Sometimes they are eaten whole, a little salt being considered a great addition to the dish; sometimes they are pounded into a flour and made into a kind of mush. Not a very tempting dish either, or anyway, you say, nevertheless regarded as rather extra by the Africans, who are often kept from pinching hunger by a plentiful visitation of these little pests. Mr. Moffat tells us that his people were especially grateful for them just at this time, when long drought and war had rendered them well nigh destitute of every kind of food.

XIII.

NINE YEARS OF WORK—FAITH—AT LAST—TEACHING MEN AND WOMEN TO SEW—RESULTS OF THE NEW BIRTH.

NINE YEARS of faithful work for God had now past and no visible spiritual results to encourage the workers at the Kuruman station. It had been a long night surely! But the dawn of God's day was certainly at hand. That it would come Mr. and Mrs. Moffat had never doubted, but the long waiting was trying to their anxious hearts. So great had been their faith in its coming, that on one occasion when a friend in England had written asking in what way she could help them in their work, Mrs. Moffat had answered before there was a gleam of daylight.

"Send us a communion set, we shall want it some day." And that someday came in 1829, when, strange to say, the communion set arrived just in time to be of immediate use.

And that day did not come with a long drawn out glimmering dawn, but was ushered in with a glorious burst of sunlight as it were from behind discouraging clouds. It was an astonishing outpouring of God's spirit, when the fruit of all the patient, loving labor of the past years appeared almost instantaneously.

Yet it was a tender, quiet change. Men and women with broken hearts and tearful eyes flocked to the missionaries, confessing themselves sinners, acknowledging Christ as their only Savior and asking for a better knowledge of

the way of eternal life. Notwithstanding his anxious prayers, and his unwavering faith, Mr. Moffat confessed himself astonished at the plentiful answers to both.

The little chapel became too small for the congregation that would enter it. Dirt and heathenish indecency disappeared. Native costumes, such as there happened to be of them, gave way to such as were worn by the teachers. Women came to Mrs. Moffat to learn to be good wives, mothers, housekeepers. Men, as well as women, came to her to learn to shape, fit and make proper clothing, and laughable were some of her experiences with some of these poor men, who, by nature, did not take as handily to the needle and scissors as did the women.

On all hands it was a new birth, new creatures, new times, new practices. Prayer meetings, and praise meetings were held by the natives from house to house, lasting, frequently, till near the morning's dawn. Those who had been the sharpest thorns in the sides of the missionaries, when converted, became foremost in endeavors to teach others the way of salvation, urging their unconverted friends to come to their blessed Savior, and see Him for themselves, and live.

Practical results could but grow out of this change of natures. A new large church was built. A brick school house went up; both without expense to the London Missionary Society. Respectable homes were built. Women were given their proper position. Chairs, tables, beds, candles, even decorations were put into the homes. The food and mode of cooking and eating it changed. The sick and dying were properly cared for and buried; and very touching were some of the death-bed scenes as narrated by Mr. Moffat.

In CHRIST JESUS we are all new creatures, whether in Africa or America.

XIV

VISITORS—BECHWANAS *vs.* MATEBELES—VISIT LEADS TO IMPORTANT ENDS—GOES WITH THE VISITORS—GREAT KING MOSILIKATSE—PEOPLE AND COUNTRY—WORK OF THE DREADED KING.

THE news of this blessed change at the Kuruman, and the consequent prosperity and advancement, could not be confined, and those from outside came to see if what they heard was true; if so, to learn, and take back to their own tribes the secret of the wonderful transformation.

From a mighty, warlike, and barbarous king, called Mosilikatse, living nearly seven hundred miles to the eastward of Bechwanaland, came two chief men to see the Kuruman, and inquire into its ways. Quite shocked were its now delicate inhabitants, clothed and in their right mind, on beholding their naked visitors; and they, feeling somewhat out of style in their present surroundings, in the common garb of their own land, gladly put on the garments offered them, after which every attention was paid to them. All they wished to see was shown them, the Bechwanas with justifiable pride, willingly, and minutely explaining everything to them; and much astonished were they at houses, gardens, water-ditches, the smith-forge and its tools; which were worked for their instruction and entertainment; the church, the school-house, in both of which places they were amazed to see people gather, in one for quiet, reverential worship, and in the other for instruction out of books, off of maps, and black-boards. At the people themselves they were astonished; their wisdom, dress, behavior; declaring

them to be men, whereas they were but children. All they saw or heard was to be remembered and reported to their great king.

This visit led to important ends for the Kuruman station. When these ambassadors were about to return to their home, news came that a certain tribe of the Bechwana people, not belonging to the Kuruman, or touched by its advantages, and enemies to king Mosilikatse, were intending to waylay, and murder these, his servants. This the Kuruman people could not allow, if possible to prevent it; not only because these men had been their guests, but also because their death would be revenged on all Bechwanas, whether belonging to the station, or outside of it.

After much consultation; not knowing what might be their own fate in so doing; Mr. Moffat advised that he, with a company from the station, should escort the ambassadors on their journey, beyond the point of danger. This was done in safety, and so much to the joy of the men, that nothing would do, but that Mr. Moffat must go on with them to their king, to receive his personal thanks for the protection afforded his subjects, as well as for the favors shown them at the station. In vain did the busy missionary plead the necessity of an immediate return to his waiting work.

It was God's will, as it proved, that he should go on to that king, and though the journey was anything but pleasant, and consumed much precious time, Mr. Moffat was ever afterwards glad that he made it, for out of it came a friendship towards him on the part of King Mosilikatse, that preserved the Kuruman and its interests from all trouble from him; cruel savage though he was.

This journey took Mr. Moffat through a portion of the country quite unknown to him, and in contact with people

different from any before seen by him. He tells us that once his attention was arrested by a beautiful, and gigantic tree, in the large branches of which he found seventeen bee-hive shaped, little houses, the abodes of human beings. The men were away but the women were "at home" and received him kindly, encouraging his investigations as well as they could, considering there was no mode of communication, beyond signs, between them. One woman treated him to locusts, which, being hungry, he ate with a relish. From all parts of the tree the other women came to gaze upon the white stranger, or strange white creature, for to them, he was as much of a curiosity, as was the inhabited tree to him.

Another day Mr. Moffat speaks of passing through a village of some forty houses, built upon poles, seven or eight feet high above the ground. To protect themselves from the lions, so common then, in the more desolate regions, were these modes of house building adopted.

Every where the people seemed very destitute. Their country lay too near to the land of the heartless chief Mr. Moffat was on his way to see, and by him their homes had been repeatedly destroyed, their cattle taken, their friends and neighbors killed.

Along the route were the remains of towns, some of which showed that labor and a degree of skill had been spent in their construction; but all laid in ashes by the tyrant who had made the country almost a wilderness, the bleached bones of many of his victims telling a sadder tale than did even the ruins of homes or towns.

The country itself was wonderfully luxurious, a well watered, black, rich soil, now teaming with its wild verdure, and well capable of supporting a large population, and many cattle.

XV.

MEETS THE KING—HE FANCIES MOFFAT—MOFFAT TALKS FREELY—TELLS THE "GLAD NEWS"—INFLUENCE OVER THE KING—POSITION AMONG THE PEOPLE—SPIRITUAL RESULTS DOUBTFUL.

WITH much ceremony Mr. Moffat was ushered into the presence of the great barbarian, known among his own people, whom he ruled with a rod of iron, as the "Elephant," the "Lion's Paw," the "King of Heavens," and other names indicative of his power, strength, and grandeur.

The ambassadors had prepared the meeting, assuring his majesty that his visitor was mighty and distinguished, in proof of which they poured into his doubting ears a tale of what they had seen and heard at the Kuruman; also dwelling largely upon the kindness shown them, his servants.

In receiving his visitor the king tried to shake hands with him, as he had been informed was the proper mode of saluting him; then, according to his own custom, he had the party served with food, and said to Mr. Moffat:

"The land is before you, you are come as my son. You must sleep where you please."

The wagons filled him with fear, they were the first he had ever seen, and he took them for huge living monsters, nor could he be satisfied about them till Umbate, one of the men who had been at the Kuruman assured him he had seen one in the process of making.

Perhaps it should be said here that the people over whom this king reigned were known as the Matebele tribes.

Mosilikatse, who at once took a great liking to Mr. Moffat, because of the kindness shown his chief men, and on account of his own personal attractions, detained him ten days, during which time the missionary held several very serious and plain conversations with the Monarch concerning his conduct generally, but especially on the points of his freedom with human life and the terrible wars he made throughout the country, far and near. Often did those about the king tremble for Mr. Moffat as he thus dared to suggest changes in his mode of life or government.

Never before, without the expectation of instant death, had one in his domain ventured to cast a reflection upon this mighty one's acts, dreadful though they frequently were. Yet he was never really angry with Mr. Moffat, though sometimes he would refuse to hear more, or rise and abruptly leave his presence.

He wanted news and instructions from the missionary, who never lost the opportunity to mingle with whatever else he imparted to him, the glad news of our great salvation and to instruct him regarding our God, but so little heed would he give to this kind of news or instruction, that Mr. Moffat feared his heart was altogether too hard for the seed to even lie on its surface.

One day, however, he found his efforts and prayers answered beyond his expectations. A prisoner was led forth to judgment, before a bar never known to pronounce any but the one sentence of death; but this day, (and the prisoner was certainly guilty that time) the King looking at Mr. Moffat, as if remembering what he had said to him on the subject of human life, then at the prisoner, to the astonishment of all present, said:

"You are a dead man; but I shall do to-day what I never

did before; I spare your life for the sake of my friend, my father," pointing to Mr. Moffat, "Moshete," as he called him. "I know his heart weeps at the shedding of blood...., he tells me that to take away life is a terrible thing. He has made my heart white as milk."

Though such degradations were put upon the criminal that he begged for death rather than life under them, and was finally executed, this hitherto unheard of leniency proved that God's servant had, with his teachings and pleadings, touched the king's blackened heart, and with new courage he sought to lift this degraded creature up into the higher life to be lived only in the light of God's teachings.

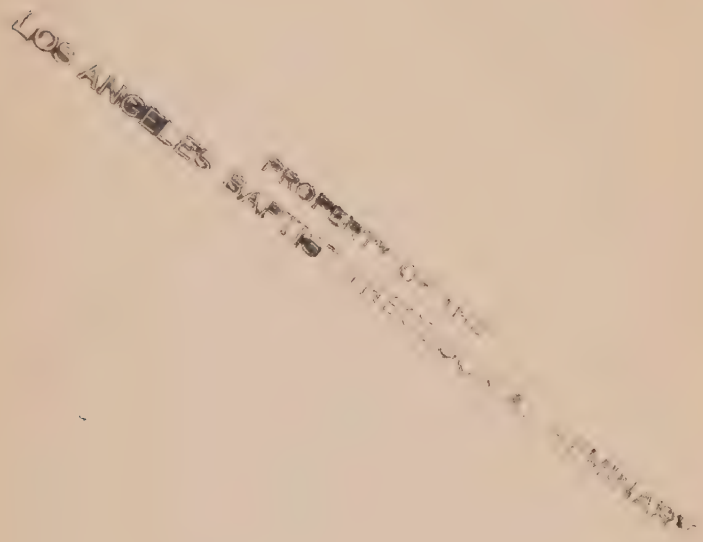
His influence over their chief, raised Mr. Moffat to a place high in the esteem of all this people; for who but a mighty man could so control the heart never before known to throb with pity, or love, or sympathy. They knew nothing of the great God who was working through his servant, and in whose hands the hearts of all men are.

All the results of that visit eternity alone will reveal. The essential point surely gained was the friendship of this king, "this Napoleon of the desert," as Moffat styled him. As the time for the missionary's departure drew near, the king's affection for him became very evident. He clung to him, desiring to keep him longer; accompanied him a distance on his journey; then sent his principal man, and an escort further on with him. As he bade him good-bye, he said:

"Your visit seems like a dream to me. Go in peace. Tell the white king I wish to live in friendship. Let the road to the Kuruman forever remain open." He wanted him to come back soon to stay a whole year, and as the wagons moved on away from him, he sat down and moaned out a sad dirge.

In all his lawless and avaricious cruelty he never inflicted harm upon the Kuruman station, even going so far as to pardon some Bechwana prisoners, on one occasion, when he found out that they knew his "Moshete."

Does not the reflection come here? "What a power, even upon a barbarian, is the man of God? What elevating influences fall from him into the darkest natures!" Shall we not then send such teachers and preachers to them, even though we wait long for the visible results of time, money and prayers?


LOS ANGELES PROPERTY OF THE SAFETY

XVI.

TRANSLATIONS—LEARNS TO PRINT—OVERWORK AND AFFLICTIONS—DR SMITH—VISITS MOSILIKATSE AGAIN.

FOR some time previous to the visit noted in the last chapter, Mr. Moffat had been deeply engaged in translating the Scriptures into the native tongue of the Bechwanas. For several reasons he had found it difficult to have his printing properly done at Cape Colony; but in the providence of God, in the year 1830 a printing press came into the possession of the Kuruman, and Mr. Moffat at once set himself to the task of learning to print.

He was certainly, as we remember his other accomplishments in the blacksmith's shop, on the farm, in the carpenter's shop, in the study and pulpit, a very versatile man.

Soon the mission became independent in the matter of its own printing, which proved a further source of enlightenment, and advancement to its people, as the scattering of tracts, the multiplication of school books, as well as of portions of the Scriptures, aided in the more rapid spread of christianizing influences.

Over-work, however, now told upon Mr. Moffat, and he was laid low with a severe fever, and as one trouble often has many followers, in this case, the family was soon called upon to mourn the death of a young son and brother, soon after which Mrs. Moffat was brought to and held long at death's door. But for the providential appearance among

them of one Dr. Andrew Smith, and his skillful incessant care, it is hardly possible that she would have lived.

Dr. Smith was one of a Scientific Expedition exploring the country, and knowing of Mr. Moffat's friendship with King Mosilikatse, through whose country he wished to go, induced him to accompany him to that king, as soon as Mrs. Moffat was well enough to be left. It was well for the doctor and for his cause that Mr. Moffat did accompany him, for, though a very fine man every way, he had no patience with the peculiarities of the heathen—king or peasant—and but for Mr. Moffat, would have, several times, gotten himself into serious difficulties.

During this visit with Mosilikatse, Mr. Moffat procured from him a supply of timber for roofing the new church at the Kuruman; also tried to prepare the way for a missionary station among his people. It was hoped that some American missionaries would step into the opening thus made for them, but I do not find that such ever did establish themselves there, going rather, I think, into the more purely Zulu country.

While off on these wearying inland trips, the station's work faithfully planned by Mr. Moffat, was carried forward by Mr. Hamilton, assisted by the missionary Edwards, who was of much help to the station on account of his skill in the use of carpenter's tools. We have already learned that a missionary's usefulness was not only in preaching and teaching of Christ Jesus, but also in being able to teach the natives white men's ways of caring for themselves physically.

XVII.

VISITS ENGLAND—COMPLETED NEW TESTAMENT—SAD VOYAGE—RECEPTION—CHANGES—DELAY IN ENGLAND—LITERARY WORK—INFLUENCE FOR MSSSIONS.

IN 1838 a glad treat came to Mr. Moffat and his family. Nothing less than a trip to England after, for him, twenty-three years of absence; for his wife twenty years. The demands of health made rest from work beneath Africa's sun essential, but business for the mission also prompted the visit.

Robert Moffat had now completed the translation of the whole of the New Testament, the printing of which was too great an undertaking for the mission press, with its inadequate supply of type and printers, and experience having proven the facilities at the Colony to be little superior, it was deemed best to take the translation to England for publication.

The voyage thither was a sad, comfortless one. The ship was small, and crowded with soldiers. The winds were rough and contrary. A few hours after sailing, a little daughter was born, when she was but three days old Jamie, a son of six years of age, sickened and died, after which another child's life hung in the balance between life and death for some days. The price of the Gospel to the heathen in Africa must have seemed much to the prostrate mother.

After three tedious months the Moffats trod once more on English soil, where their welcome was, (to them) surprisingly flattering. Such were the enthusiastic receptions given them in many different places; such the demand for Mr. Moffat to address the public meetings prepared, even before his landing, that rest, or work for the mission station, was, for the time, out of the question.

While hard at work in Africa, amid the discouragements he only could appreciate, Mr. Moffat had fancied his work there was not being as well recognized in England, as it should be. Now he found, to his cheer, that all his movements had been watched with approving interest, that even his letters, relative to that work, written to the London Society, had been made into circular letters, and widely distributed, and now to see and hear their author seemed the desire of every one. From town to town he was hurried, as fast as the convenience for travel in those days would allow, till he was obliged to insist upon the quiet he so needed for himself, and for the work he must do for the mission. To the translations brought with him, Mr. Moffat wished during his stay in England, to add that of the Psalms.

Changed indeed they find their old homes and haunts. More changed for Mrs. Moffat than for her husband, for death had removed her mother, and broken up the home in Dukinfield Nursery, near Manchester. Mr. Moffat's parents were both spared to welcome him back to his old home in Scotland. Brothers and sisters of both were dead or scattered over the earth, and many of the friends of their youth were not to be accounted for at all.

On leaving Africa in 1838, for England, Mr. Moffat had hoped to get his work done in a short time, and return to the Kuruman the following winter, but the demands made

upon his time by the public were so many, and the work of the new translations (besides other literary work, undertaken by him) so much, that it was not until December 1843 that he again found himself at the Kuruman surrounded by his beloved people, who had commenced to fear they were never again to enjoy the presence of their dear teacher.

It was during this visit that Robert Moffat prepared and issued his celebrated book, "Labors and Scenes in South Africa," which reads like a romance from beginning to end. This visit, also produced an intense interest in foreign missionary work among both old and young. A few sentences from one of the many letters, written to him regarding the work he then did, will fairly represent the influences he left behind him wherever he spoke.

"Your visit to us we can never forget. Our little children are already, in their infantine chronology, beginning to date from the time when Mr. Moffat spoke to them. And believe me, to many of us, in riper years, the time when you spoke to us will be as a sunny spot on the dusty, and troubled road along which we journey.... You have opened before us a new page of human society and character, and have confirmed our attachment to the missionary cause, by showing that there is no tribe too degraded for the Gospel to elevate; no heart too polluted for Christianity to purify."

With children it is said, Mr. Moffat's ability to interest was unbounded. Sometimes he had hundreds of little ones as listeners; on one occasion, fully a thousand were held spell-bound to the end of his lengthy talk.

XVIII.

NEW HELPERS FOR THE STATION—JOY AT THE STATION—BRANCHING OUT —BEAUTIFUL CUSTOM—A CONTRAST—REFLECTIONS.

WHILE in England, Mr. Moffat saw two new men commissioned for missionary work at the Kuruman,—a Mr. William Ross, and, the afterwards great David Livingstone, both of whom preceded him to Africa, carrying with them a large edition of the translated New Testament, for use among the Bechwanas.

Great was the joy at the station when it became known that the beloved Moffat and his wife were actually on the road to it again. A hundred and fifty miles from the mission the homeward bound party began to meet welcoming friends, bringing with them greetings from the waiting ones, as well as things to cheer, and make easier the remainder of the always, then, wearying journey; while, like those long from a beloved home, Mr. and Mrs. Moffat eagerly hurried on to the midst of the people, for whom their love and interest had been intensified by a long separation.

The strength of the mission was now sufficiently great to justify a branching out from the centre of operations, and planting, among the nearer tribes outside of it, other stations with teachers of their own, to all of which the Kuruman was to be the centre of supplies; the place of all important meetings. There Mr. Moffat and a Mr. Ashton were to pros-

ecute the work, with such aid as the venerable Mr. Hamilton was still able to render them, and busier if possible were the days following Mr. Moffat's return from England, than had been those before his going there.

A very beautiful custom seems to have grown up at the mission station about this time. Each evening, as the sun went down, all work was laid aside, and to a near eminence all, who wished to do so, went to meet friends and neighbors, and there, says a son of Robert Moffat in a memoir of his parents, his father could lift his eyes over the quiet "broad valley, once a reedy morass"; see the church, the school buildings, the mission houses, the native village, and contrast this present prosperity of people and country, with the time when the valley was the "gloomy and dreaded haunt of the wild Bushmen, with their poisoned arrows, and when the whole land was full of war and rapine."

Do foreign missions pay? Would it have been better, or as well to have left those sable sons and daughters of Africa alone in their nakedness, and degradation, and blood-shedding? Was any one on the home field a sufferer for sharing in the great work of their elevation, or because of it; and thus relieving the world of a little of the load of sin under which it groans?

XIX.

Oldest Daughter Marries Livingstone—Thus Becomes a Missionary—Outside Work Again—Mrs. Moffat a Power in the Work—A Disappointment.

THAT all their children should become missionaries, and give their life's work to Africa was the ardent wish of both Mr. and Mrs. Moffat. Not long after their return to the Kuruman, their oldest daughter, Mary, was married to the missionary, David Livingstone, thus gratifying in part that wish, for, as her mother before her had entered into all of her husband's work, so she expected to aid her husband. Of this son-in-law, the illustrious man, whom Mr. Moffat really gave to Africa, and to the world, inasmuch as he influenced him into the African work, and was his helper in many hours of peril and trouble, we will have more to say. The Livingstones were placed about two hundred miles from the Kuruman; northeast of it; this being one of the stations planted by it.

These out stations were subject to many trials. Several of them were in unprotected wilds, where the lions were wont to help themselves freely to the cattle, and where outsiders could persecute, without restraint the little bands of Christians. As lights in very dark places were they set, and only a conviction of duty to the heathen about them, together with the earnest entreaties of the missionaries, kept most of the converts from removing to the Kuruman.

For their encouragement the missionaries at the mother-station, especially Mr. Moffat visited them as frequently as possible; and we can imagine him on those toilsome journeys beneath the scorching sun going here and there, scattering his translated New Testament, tracts, school-books, and such of the Old Testament as was already in print, for, on returning from England, he had at once gone to the work of translating the Old Testament Scriptures.

That one man could have gotten through with so great an amount of work, including his travels, is marvelous. As a helper he had a rare wife, one who did not shrink from a place at his side no matter what the undertaking. One who could and did heroically relieve him where it was possible for her to do so. On one occasion that some of the children might be put in school, Mrs. Moffat with an escort of a few servants, took the long journey to the Cape alone, her husband being too crowded with mission work to go himself. To understand the trials and dangers of such a journey for a woman in those days, one must thoroughly understand the conditions of the roadless, waterless, foodless wild country, with its wild beasts and quite as dangerous inhabitants.

You see one can not help speaking now and then of this noble woman, though it is a memoir of her husband that is being written, because in her life as in that of many other missionaries' wives, we see a woman living up to the glorious possibilities of her womanhood, being a power to her husband in his work and thus helping him forward into the renown that the world gave him, as well as making his eternity brighter.

These parents, as already mentioned, desired their children to become missionaries, and to that end, that he might take a leading place in Africa, they had been educating

their son Robert in England, and as they thought him almost ready to come to their aid, his health gave way and he was obliged to seek work less trying than that of a missionary. This was a keen disappointment to Mr. Moffat, though as a government official his son was able to and did render the cause of missions much valuable aid.

XX.

CLOUDS GATHERING—NO NEW STORY—BOERS DESTROY MISSION STATIONS—TROUBLED HEARTS.

WE have now reached, in the life of the Kuruman mission, under Mr. Moffat, the twenty-ninth or thirtieth year, and the few years just passed had been those of almost uninterrupted tranquil prosperity; but now and for a little time previous to this date, 1848 and '49, there had been creeping into the horizon of its sky a cloud that threatened its future. This cloud grew out of the gradual, and bold encroachments of the Dutch farmers (Boers) upon the possessions of the natives.

To us Americans it is no new story, but much the same as that of our own unjust dealings with the Indians. What, to those white men, were the rights of the native black pagans? And the government did not raise its hands to protect those who were of no profit to it; those who seemed even to be the property of any one who could capture them. Whose heart does not chill when reading of the slave trade of the African coasts? And many of the slaves there sold and shipped were stolen from interior tribes.

As there was protection for these natives nowhere but in their own power, which was but small against a superior enemy, it came to pass that the Boers spread themselves all over the land, where they would, beyond the colony's possessions driving the rightful owners they cared not where; dispelling from their minds the little esteem for the whites the missionaries had been able to inspire.

The Kuruman station itself, on account of its situation and lack of some of the advantages possessed by other

parts of the country,—possibly because it was the Lord's ground,—was never subject to an invasion, though several times threatened; but its work and influence in time were much restricted. The people beyond its borders, over whom it stretched its elevating hands, were scattering before the invaders, till all that part of the country now known as the Orange Free States became almost destitute of native inhabitants.

Against the missionaries, because they dared to raise their voices in behalf of the natives, and sought to protect them in their homes on the land of their forefathers, was the ire of these Boers directed, and they took possession of mission stations with the same coolness they manifested when dealing with the uncivilized natives.

The work of Livingstone's station was entirely hindered, the station abandoned, and its property destroyed. Mr. Edwards, another missionary from the Kuruman, was driven from his station, and forbidden to ever again enter the place. In the case of David Livingstone good came out of the evil, for on leaving this mission field, he began those explorations of such benefit to the world.

The condition of things naturally imbittered the native heart against all white people, till the missionaries were no more to them, not knowing them well, than were their oppressors. No wonder the hearts of those devoted men and women sank at all they saw or heard. The work of their self-denying lives seemed about to be cast to the winds. In a letter to one Doctor Tidman, speaking of current events, Mr. Moffat says:

"The closer I stick to work the less inconvenience I feel. Were I to leave my mind to take its own course, it would think of nothing else, and would break down entirely."

XXI.

MORE TRANSLATIONS—VISIT TO REMAINS OF OUTSIDE WORK—ANXIETY ABOUT LIVINGSTONE—VISITS KING MOSILIKATSE AGAIN—TIME CHANGES ALL MEN—CURES THE KING—TOO MUCH COMPANY.

ALL this time Mr. Moffat, assisted by Mr. Ashton, kept steadily on with the Kuruman work, especially with the translation of the Old Testament Scriptures; also making that of "Pilgrim's Progress" and some other such literature. Their faithful helper, Mr. Hamilton, had been called to his reward, and his friends were not sorry that he had escaped the sights and sounds so trying to them.

Work and anxiety, the latter more especially, told severely on Mr. Moffat, and it was deemed best that for change and rest, he should visit the outside work of the mission. Little of that work remained to be visited. Of the several branches planted in those prosperous days, but three remained; cared for only by as many native teachers; not one white teacher being left to do the Lord's work outside of the Kuruman.

Another object of the proposed journey was to obtain, if possible, news concerning David Livingstone, from whom not one word had come for many months. Through Mosilikatse's country, Livingstone had gone, and to him Mr. Moffat went.

As the missionary and the king met for the third time, neither hardly knew the other. Mr. Moffat's hair had

whitened; so had the long black beard that had so charmed the king on previous visits, as he had been allowed to lovingly fondle it. And the king, Mr. Moffat found a helpless, dropsical invalid; just as glad as ever, however, to see his "Moshete." So glad that he did not restrain the tears of joy that filled his eyes, though he threw his mantle over his head to hide them from his own people, for tears were weak things for great men.

Mr. Moffat took the king's case into his clever hands, devoting the first part of his three months' stay with him, to curing him. Morally he found him, and his people as he had left them, and with no desires for better ways.

The tribe was not located as on Mr. Moffat's other visits. After all his high-handed lawlessness, Mosilikatse, had finally been conquered; a combination of tribes having engaged in war against him, and driven him from his old home. Seclusion had always been a point with this people; more so now, for on removing from their former possessions, they had retired to an isolated spot, and closed communication with the world at large. It was therefore with much difficulty, and after various hinderances, that Mr. Moffat could get the king to aid him in his search for Livingstone through the north country; so great was his dread of opening "roads into other lands," fearing, in his old age, attacks from powerful enemies.

At last, however, he consented to help his friend, and to the latter's dismay furnished him for the search, with much more company than he desired; the king himself taking a fancy to journey with Mr. Moffat. Young, hardy, unencumbered men were needed for the undertaking, and the presence of this aged king with his retinue; the court, the wives, the soldiers, cattle, for use and food; all of which, and

whom must compose his majesty's escort on any journey, greatly hindered the progress of the search, and it was speed, rather than elegance that Mr. Moffat wished.

Nevertheless, as there was no way of avoiding the situation, he accepted it, looking upon those long days of slow progress, as times during which to again try to awaken in the minds of the unwelcome and undesirable company, some anxiety about their future welfare, and he had the satisfaction of seeing the king at least more attentive to his instructions than ever before.

At last it became evident that the over-burdened train could not go on over the unbroken, untrodden country, and Mr. Moffat persuaded Mosilikatse to allow a small party to proceed in search of Livingstone; he remaining to return with the king's party. Very faithfully did the unguarded party of natives, sent on to find Livingstone, do their work; for we learn that when they had reached the limits of their orders, or their ability to carry them out, they left the supplies and letters, sent to Mr. Livingstone, where they could safely wait his coming; and where he did receive them, all uninjured, several months afterwards, when he came back from his first expedition into the interior, as greatly to the relief of a waiting world, as of an anxious family circle.

XXII.

AT HOME AGAIN—HIS MOTHER'S DEATH—WHOLE BIBLE TRANSLATED—REACHES OUT TO OTHER TRIBES—SACRIFICES FOR HIM—OTHER MEN ON HIS GROUND—SPIRIT OF CHRISTIAN LOVE.

WHEN, after an absence of several months, Mr. Moffat reached the Kuruman again, it was to find himself at home, without a home; Mrs. Moffat having once more undertaken the journey to the Cape on business connected with their children's school life. The Ashton's were also away from the station. It was on this return that he first learned of the death of his mother, though the event had taken place several months before. His father had been dead some years.

In 1857 Mr. Moffat had the satisfaction of seeing the whole Bible translated into the tongue of the Bechwanas. Through the New Testament he had worked his way unaided, and through the greater undertaking of the Old Testament, his chief helper had been Mr. Ashton; and the work had all been done in the face of numberless difficulties and interruptions.

This great task finished, Mr. Moffat began to plan for a work long on his heart; that of reaching out and planting mission stations among tribes distant from the Bechwanas, and, as yet, unmolested by the white invader. His first thought being for the Makololos, a tribe in which Livingstone had become greatly interested; and for the Matebeles, the people of King Mosilikatse. The London Society gave its sanction to these undertakings, and requested Mr. Moffat

to at once start the work, holding himself in readiness to spend at least one year with the Matebeles.

Before he consented to do this there were many things for him to consider. He was now more than sixty years of age; had been more than forty years a missionary. He must leave his home and its comforts; he must leave his wife behind him; she was no longer vigorous enough to endure the beginnings of missionary life in a new field. He must leave the Kuruman work in strange hands, as Mr. Ashton had been transferred to another mission. He must undergo the hardships of the early days of the Kuruman; nevertheless for the sake of souls he could and would make any and all the sacrifices the step would cost him.

His first move towards the new work was a hasty visit to Mosilikatse to explain affairs to him, to get him interested, to get his permission, to gain for the cause his good will and support. The planting of mission stations was beginning to be a difficult thing to accomplish; the blacks looking upon them as openings for the whites into their country. Here they were not altogether wrong, for does not the introduction of Christianity always make desirable places, before undesirable. Certainly in South Africa the missionaries work brought to the white settlers advantages for which they illy paid.

At first Mosilikatse was reluctant to receive the missionaries, others than his "dear Moshete." He would be welcomed with open arms and the whole land given to him, but it was with much difficulty that Mr. Moffat prevailed upon him to promise to receive two young men with their families.

While on his way to see Mosilikatse, Mr. Moffat took the opportunity of visiting the vicinity of Livingstone's old station, where, to his surprise, he found some Hanoverian

missionaries at work. These men were there with the sanction of the Boers, and were really blameless for the breach of courtesy that allowed one society's missionaries upon the ground already occupied by another society; and Mr. Moffat, though disappointed that the work he had fostered there had all been undone, bade the new men "God Speed," and left for their aid Paul, a native teacher from the Kuruman. Some of the natives who remembered him, also Livingstone's work among them, and had seen the latter forced to leave the station and his house burned, had not welcomed the present missionaries. Mr. Moffat earnestly urged them to receive the new missionaries, and uphold them in their work, being glad that what his friends had not been allowed to do, was being done by some one. For some years the Hanoverian Society worked here but finally withdrew, and the London Society again took possession of the station.

XXIII.

Unsettled Country—Meets Livingstone for the Last Time—The Kuruman in Danger—Cause—Deliverance—Again Crippled—More Translations—Matebele Mission Established—Trying Journey.

SO unsettled was the whole country north of the Colony, because of grievances between the Dutch Boers, and the English government at this time; also between the natives and these white settlers, that all thought of an immediate establishment of the proposed missions had to be abandoned till more tranquil times, which did not come till the year 1859.

Meantime Mr. Moffat, on returning from his last trip to Mosilikatse, went on to Cape Colony; called there to meet, and, as it proved, to see Livingstone for the last time. This explorer was about to enter upon his second expedition into the lake, and river regions of Africa; taking with him, at his own expense, as the missionary of his party, a son of Mr. Moffat.

While at the Cape, news of threatened danger to the Kuruman reached him. As usual there was trouble between the Boers and natives. In this instance, one of the most southern of the Bechwana tribes had dared to rebel against the usurpations of the Dutch, whereupon they brought their superior modes of warfare to bear upon the almost defenseless natives; easily vanquishing them, and after possessing

themselves of their all, retired with the promise of a speedy return, and an advance, even upon the Kuruman itself, which they "would then root out of existence."

In all likelihood this savage threat would have been fulfilled had not God come to the aid of "His own" and raised to the defense of the station, Sir George Grey, High Commissioner of the English Government, who, in plain language, informed these high-handed robbers, that any injury inflicted upon the Kuruman, or any of its mission property, would be speedily and severely punished. With much muttering the Boers concluded it was wise not to trifle with the English Government, and kept at a proper distance from the station; nevertheless, its work was again greatly crippled, and its influence retarded.

During this time of anxiety Mr. Moffat devoted himself to the translation of a hymn-book, for use in the church services, and when quiet was restored, he turned his attention again to the missions among the Makololos, and Matebeles. The first named mission was soon discontinued, as, in less than two years, nearly half of the company of missionaries sent there, had died of the fevers bred in the marshy land of that tribe.

Mr. Moffat went with the two young men, and their families (one being a son of his own) who were to settle among the Matebeles. The journey was an exceedingly trying one for the now aged missionary. It was altogether a different matter to push his own way, accompanied only by a few servants, through seven hundred miles of roadless country, from that of taking two entire families of civilized people, with their necessary belongings and needed supplies over that same unbroken country.

To add to the hardships of the trip, the work oxen sick-

ened, and with difficulty drew the wagons; and when not far from Mosilikatse's kraal, gave out entirely. Mr. Moffat sent word of his approach to the chief, and asked for the use of some of his oxen; instead, the chief sent men; an inadequate supply of them; to pull the loads, causing further delay and annoyance.

XXIV.

DISCOURAGING RECEPTION—ANXIETY—RECEIVED AT LAST—MR. MOFFAT'S WORK—LAST PLEADINGS WITH THIS PEOPLE—PARTING FROM THE KING—FIVE CHILDREN GIVEN TO AFRICA'S WORK—AFFLICTIONS.

KING Mosilikatse received his "friend," his "father," "Moshete" with his usual warm welcome; but from the young missionaries he turned away coldly, having repented of the permission he had given them to come; his mind since Mr. Moffat's visit, having been poisoned against missionary efforts, by communication with a neighboring tribe, which had suffered much from the hands of the Dutch settlers.

This reception caused Mr. Moffat, as well as the young missionaries, much anxiety, especially as they could get from the chief no hint of his future intentions; and more anxious were they still, when suddenly he broke up his kraal and vanished to parts unknown, leaving word that he would send for the missionaries soon. In this promise Mr. Moffat put some confidence; the younger men, who had never seen the best side of Mosilikatse, very little; yet they all waited where they were.

When hope had about died out, the king did send for them to come to his new home at Inyati. With the messengers were sent ox teams to help the missionaries to him. Quickly and gladly was the royal invitation obeyed,

and thankful were the missionaries for the cordial welcome at last extended to them. The king gave them their choice of spots whereon to build their houses, to the construction of which they went at once.

Mr. Moffat remained with this station till he saw it fully established. Old and worn with service as he was, he handled the ax, the hammer, or wielded the tools in the blacksmith's forge; helped in any, in every way; especially was he efficient in establishing a friendship between the new comers and the chief, and people. As long as this chief lived he was strictly true to his pledges of friendly interest in the mission, and on his death, his son—his successor—was equally friendly to it.

The final parting between Mr. Moffat and the king, who truly loved him, was affecting. Each knew they would never more meet on earth; and earnestly did Mr. Moffat try to prepare the king to meet him in heaven. With the people also he prayed, and plead for better lives. As a farewell, there was held a religious service in which, with all the power of his earnest soul, he pointed to Christ as their way into the better lives he would have them live, tried to impress his beauties upon their minds, and told of his love and yearnings for all mankind; so great that they had manifested themselves even in the death upon the cross; but history tells us of no fruits of such pleadings, or of the subsequent work of the mission there.

In 1861 Bessie, another daughter of the Moffats, joined the missionary force of Africa, by marrying the missionary Price, thus making, including the son who had accompanied Livingstone to the Zambezi region, five children in the missionary work; another daughter, not mentioned heretofore, had married a French missionary named Fredoux. Bessie

and her husband, at first intended for the Matebele mission, were afterwards stationed on Livingstone's old field of labor, the Hanoverians having withdrawn from it. In this year Robert, the oldest son, died, and during the year 1862, the aged parents were called upon to mourn again; this time for Mary, the wife of David Livingstone.

XXV.

ALONE AT THE KURUMAN—AID SENT—MR. MOFFAT INJURED—FATHER AND SON WORKING TOGETHER—TIME FOR RESTING—HEART ALWAYS IN AFRICA—LEAVES THAT LAND—A TENDER FAREWELL SERVICE—CHANGES IN FIFTY YEARS—HIS SHARE IN BRINGING CHANGES ABOUT.

IN 1865 Mr. Moffat found the entire work of the Kuruman on his hands, death and removals having taken from him all his helpers. Heavy work certainly for one of his age; but he carried it bravely till near the close of the year, when his son, from the Matebele mission, was appointed to help him; also, a little later, a Mr. Brown, from England, reached the station. This needed aid might not have come as soon as it did, but for an accident, proving nearly a death blow, inflicted upon Mr. Moffat by a lunatic at the station. Mr. Brown, however, remained there but a few months, and his departure left the father and son to carry on the work together, and alone.

One can not but stop and take into mind the picture of the aged man, with his whitened locks and flowing beard, aided and supported by the boy he had given Africa, as they worked in the great cause of souls, side by side, and day by day. We can see the thoughts of the father's experienced brain being worked out, by the more vigorous bodily efforts of the son, when his own steps were being staid by age. And more beautiful thus is the picture of those last days, amid the scenes of his many years of work, than it would have been, had it been other than his own son he had leaned upon when he could not do all himself.

Nearly fifty-four years on "Africa's sunny soil," and now an old man of seventy-five years of age; too old to longer bear the work or climate of that country; yet the pen almost refuses to write of his going from it. And perhaps no severer trial, save the death of his wife, ever came to Mr. Moffat, than that of being obliged to leave South Africa, and the people he so loved. Long did he withstand the convictions that his day of work was over, as well as the urgings of his friends to enter into the rest that now, on earth, belonged to him. His heart was where the best years of his life had been freely spent; where his children were living their lives as he had lived his; where so many of them had been laid beneath the sod. With the people, who, under God, he had raised into manhood, and womanhood in Christ; even with those, yet in their degradation, over whom his heart yearned with unutterable longings.

Nevertheless in March, 1870, Mr. Moffat preached for the last time in the Kuruman church to the Kuruman people. Can we not imagine without one word from witnesses, the sadness of that hour? Can we not at this distant day hear the sobs and see the falling tears, as the saintly, beloved, revered man's words of loving advice and instruction fell tremulously from his quivering lips? And what of the scene as he pronounced his final benediction!

The 10th of the following June, he and his wife, one son accompanying them, embarked from Cape Town for England, letting their bodies be carried forever from a land where their hearts were ever.

Did space allow, it would be well to study minutely the changes Mr. Moffat had been permitted to see take place in South Africa. The country reported a barren desert had been explored, even far up into the interior, (by Livingstone);

immense tracts of land had been opened up to settlers, often too selfishly taken possession of. The country had been found to be full of native inhabitants, where it had been supposed there were only rocks and sand and wild animals. Commerce from the interior to the coasts had been established, as well as from the coasts to the interior. Missionary work had, at one time or another, been carried on among nearly all the native tribes, much of civilization, if not always of pure Christianity, had been the result. Arts and sciences had been planted where once all was ignorance and mental waste, and Mr. Moffat's share in bringing about these changes was by no means small.

XXVI.

WARM WELCOMES—DEATH OF MRS. MOFFAT—PERSEVERES IN WORK—MOFFAT INSTITUTE—HONORED—VISITS SCENES OF BOYHOOD—HIS OLD HOME—SIMPLICITY OF CHARACTER—A QUIET HOME—KIND FRIENDS.

WARM were the welcomes extended to the returned missionaries; and, among those awaiting them, no one was more glad to see them than their daughter Helen, from whom they had been parted twenty-seven years. All those years in Africa, since their former visit to England, had but enhanced them in the esteem of the Christian world; so that before thinking to make for themselves a permanent home, they were compelled to give themselves into the hands of both public and private friends, to be entertained.

That permanent home never came to Mrs. Moffat, for in the year 1871, she was called to the mansion above, made ready for her by her Heavenly Father. This blow was a severe one to Mr. Moffat. Much more to each other had the two grown, on account of the circumstances of their lives, than is usually possible in the ordinary wedded life; husband and wife, companions, friends, counsellors, together with the various other relations that must grow out of the isolated lives they lived, and not appreciated by the many in other circumstances.

Yet he did not allow this affliction to hinder him from such work for the cause of missions, as his strength would

permit him to undertake. He attended meetings, often addressing them, ever pleading the cause of the heathen in South Africa; especially seeking to interest his hearers in the building of a Seminary, at the Kuruman Station, where native students might be thoroughly prepared for missionary work among their own people.

It was his privilege to see the funds needed for such an institution gathered, and to-day, at Kuruman, there stands what is known as "Moffat Institution;" a memorial of his labors there. Its work is what he wished it to be, that of fitting men and women to carry the Gospel truths to the benighted about it.

Though away from his old work, he could not cease from working for its advancement. In 1871 he carefully revised his translation of the Old Testament. About this time the University of Edinburgh, very justly honored him with the title of Doctor of Divinity. But no honors conferred upon him changed the sweet simplicity of his character. Though people looked upon him as the "great Robert Moffat," and treated him accordingly, he was still, to all, the simple Robert Moffat of his unknown day.

Between the years 1871 and 1873, he spent some time in revisiting the scenes of his boyhood. "High Leigh" is spoken of; Manchester, and several places in Scotland, among which was Carronshore, where he found a few who remembered him; a very few. There he found the old home, into which, by the courtesy of its present tenant, he was allowed to look once more, and where, it is said, a vision of the family circle, as it was nearly sixty years before, rose before his remembrance, while the influence of the quiet piety of that home, which had so grandly moulded his life, seemed to settle over him again.

For himself, he finally purchased a little home in Brixton, England, where he lived for several years; being enabled to do so, in comfort, through the kindness of generous friends, who put into his hands, for his personal use, several thousand pounds.

XXVII.

BURIAL OF DAVID LIVINGSTONE—WANTED EVERYWHERE—ENTHUSIASTIC FOR MISSIONS—IN PARIS—A NEW HOME—TROUBLE FOR AFRICA—ALL IN GOD'S HANDS.

IN 1874 the body of David Livingstone was brought to England for burial, and Dr. Moffat was called upon to identify it. This duty, with the funeral services in Westminster Abbey, was very trying to him, bringing vividly to his mind, as it must have done, much in the lives lived in Africa that was sad to remember now.

Of work during these last days of Dr. Moffat's life, there is little of special note to write about. His days for actual work were over; yet he was never idle; and was always in demand at private and public gatherings; and it is proper to consider his influence in behalf of foreign missions during this period of his life, as little inferior to that of any other period. He was still thoroughly enthusiastic for the cause; and enthusiasm is as mighty a power in the Lord's work as it is in any other work. If now he was unable to make his voice reach out over large halls and churches, he could, and did use it to effect in the smaller gatherings of his friends, as is proved by their increased interest in Africa's work.

In 1877 he visited Paris, where, through interpreters, he addressed audiences of adults, and children. There, as in England, men of high note considered it a favor to meet and speak with the venerable man. It would be well for us to remember as we see him thus sought, that it was in God's work he gained his renown.

On his return to England he deemed it best to remove further from London; therefore made a new home at Leigh, near the sea. Here he could enjoy the rest his age demanded, as he could not near the exciting scenes of London, with the constant demands there made upon his time and failing strength. Here also there were fields, and a garden for him to roam in and work in. It was hard for a man, so long used to the boundless wilds of Africa, to be quite happy amid the confines of bricks and mortar.

The English winters tried him, after the constant sunshine and warmth of South Africa, where but occasionally, in July or August, a slight frost was known, or a little snow would touch the higher altitudes of that southern latitude.

African affairs, greatly disturbed in 1880 and '81, troubled him much. And when in the latter year, the government of the Transvaal was given back into the hands of the Boers, his sorrow was extreme. He could appreciate what that step meant to the natives. He looked forward and saw, as it really came to pass, his own dear Bechwanaland torn and troddon on, and its people oppressed, and finally driven from their homes; meanwhile the government apparently indifferent to their distress.

That much undertaken by the London and the other missionary societies, had ended in failure was hard to think of, but harder still to bear the thought that nearly all that had been done through them must be undone, especially hard when the acknowledged cause was the unscrupulous dealings of the whites in Africa. To a friend Dr. Moffat wrote:

"I have felt often much pressed in mind from the reported sufferings of the Bechwanas; robbed and trodden down by the Transvaal Boers; and now our Senators have their hands full of perplexities."

Yet he trusted all to God. In this same letter he adds. "What a comfort amid all these dark and ominous prospects, that our Father in Heaven surveys it all, and in due time will show who is the only potentate.

XXVIII.

QUIETLY GOING HOME—GLAD YET CONTENT—THE LAST OF EARTH—FITTING CLOSE OF A NOBLE LIFE—FUNERAL—MOURNING—POINTS OF POWER—DEAD BUT YET SPEAKS—HE A PIONEER—WHAT HE DID FOR THE WORLD—THE WORLD APPRECIATIVE.

FOR sometime Dr. Moffat had been quietly walking towards the eternal city, of which the glory is the Master he had so faithfully served. Knowing that he was going, glad of it, yet happy here so long as God saw fit to leave him upon earth, he enjoyed all the sweets, and he recognized them to be many that his Heavenly Father put in his way.

His failing was so gradual as to alarm no one till the very last. That last came on the evening of Thursday, August 10th, 1883, in the 88th year of his earthly life. A sweet gentle passing away, a fitting close of a lovely, noble life. The last hours before that end were sweet for all to remember, filled, as they were, with intimate communion with his Savior; with sweet leave-taking from those of his children who were permitted to surround his bed, with messages for those in far away Africa, and always with glad anticipation of a glorious future.

The London Missionary Society took upon itself the funeral services, which were attended by all classes, many noted men being among those whe mourned. All the principal missionary societies were represented, and South Africa was personated by Mr. Hugh Exton, Mayor of Bloemfontien.

In the discources of that service the "entire consecration," the "perfect disinterestedness," the "enthusiastic zeal" of Dr. Moffat were largely dwelt upon, also his "personal fascination" as points of power and consequent success, in his work for Christ.

Beside the remains of his wife, that faithful helper for so many years, was he laid in Norwood Cemetery, August 16, 1883. But the grave covered only from sight his mortal body, for to this day and as long as South Africa endures will Robert Moffat speak to us, will the influence of his life be felt. More conspicuously in the annals of the history yet to be written of South Africa, will his name and works appear than they have yet appeared.

As yet, honor sufficient has not been paid to his name. Like other pioneers he did the first, the rougher work as it were; opening the way for others to cover themselves with renown; as did, for instance, Livingstone, whom Dr. Moffat brought to Africa; and because of Livingstone, Stanley; to both of whom the world owes much of its knowledge of Central Africa. What Dr. Robert Moffat actually, personally did for South Africa, is but the small beginning of what is to flow from his work. That the world, outside of its Christian circles, appreciated him, a few quotations from the secular papers published at the time of his death, will prove.

XXIX.

AN ABIDING NAME—HIS MISSION—WHAT THE WORLD OWES TO MISSIONS—AN ENTHUSIAST—ONE OF THE MOST NOTABLE OF MEN—CHARM OF HIS SIMPLE DIGNITY.

IN the London *Times*, the day following his burial, were these words:

"Dr. Robert Moffat, who was yesterday laid in the grave, has left an abiding name as a pioneer of modern missionary work in South Africa.....His chief work was among the Bechwanas. His picture of what they were when he first knew them, would hardly now be recognized, so entirely have they changed under the new influences, which Moffat was among the first to bring to bear upon them..... ....It was his mission to civilize as well as to instruct;.... to raise them to become the recipients of the sacred message of good tidings which it was his ultimate purpose to announce."

After speaking of his great work of translating the Scriptures into the language of the Bechwanas (first having reduced that lauguage to written characters), The *Times* goes on to say:

"The Bechwanas, under Moffat's guidance, became new men.....It was his honor to have been among the first in the field; to have laid, as it were, the stepping stones by which his successors have been able to outstrip him."

In answer to those who scoff at missionary work, the *Times* further says: "We owe to our missionaries that the whole region (South Africa) has been opened up. Apart from their special service as preachers, they have done important work as pioneers of civilization, as geographers, as contributors to philological search. Of those who have taken part in this, Moffat's name is not the best known, Livingstone—Speke—Stanley, (coming after him, because of him) have become household names. In his own simple words, it never occurred to him while working among the Bechwanas that he should obtain the applause of men. His one care was for those among whom he had cast his lot.

He was an enthusiast, of course, a man would be worth little for missionary enterprise if he were not *that* at all events.....One part of Moffat's work has been to prepare the way for others. He has given, so far, what promises to be a lasting stimulus.....Robert Moffat has died in the fullness both of years and of honor....."

Space will not allow full quotations. The *Brighton Daily* spoke thus:

"The grave has just closed over one of the most notable men whose figures are familiar to the inhabitants of Brighton. Robert Moffat, the veteran pioneer in the mission field, and the simplest of heroes, has passed away, and many of the noblest of the land followed his remains to their resting place.....Whenever he was seen it was felt that a great man was among us.....Perhaps no more genuine soul ever breathed....He addressed the cultured audiences within the majestic walls of Westminster Abbey, with the same simple unconsciousness that lent its charm to him when he led the worship within the humble conventicle.

The same simple native dignity remained as unruffled in the presence of Royalty, as when conversing with the best known friends.....
Robert Moffat belonged to no sect or party. To better the world, and advance the ONE CHURCH formed the sole end of his being."

Other secular papers were equally earnest in their praise of Dr. Robert Moffat.

XXX.

Study Lives of Noble People—The World Usually Fair—How Did Dr. Moffat Look?—God's Work, Cheerfully Done, Beautifies—Lessons From This Grand Life—Shall the Gospel be Restricted—Power of Consecration.

A CLOSE study of such a life as that lived by Dr. Moffat, can but stimulate us to try to rise to the height of our possibilities. It would be well if we studied more frequently such lives. From the extracts just given, we learn the world's opinion of such a life; and the world is usually very fair in dealing with men, though its keen eye probes deep into character, motives and results. Notwithstanding its conflicting concerns, it certainly does, as we have just seen, hold the true servant of God in high esteem.

"How did Dr. Moffat look?" That is a natural question. It has been my pleasure to study Dr. Moffat's face from a photograph, taken but a short time before his death. Also to look upon the youthful features of the boy he was when he left his home for his life's work. Wonderful and beautiful development, I cannot refrain from saying in comparing the two pictures; the former of which shows a sweet satisfied face, a fine head, with grey, not over smoothed hair, brushed off of a broad high forehead. There is an abundant long white beard; a moustache, cut close enough to show a firm mouth, and we are told that he had black piercing eyes, betokening the spirit of one who had braved many dangers; yet which could twinkle with humor, or melt in sympathy.

Fifty-four years of Africa's sunshine had deeply browned his skin. Fifty-four years of intense service for God, cheerfully done, had, if we judged alone by the story of that face, wonderfully beautified his character. It is always thus. God's work is the surest mould for beautiful characters and lives. It is also a certain way for full development of talents. Who would, when Robert Moffat was a school-boy, a sailor-boy, a gardener's lad, have picked him out to become the honored man he did become. In all likelihood had he entered upon any other work, his name to-day would have been unknown. His work demanded the constant, vigorous use of his every talent; physical, moral, spiritual; and what but a magnificent development could be the result?

A study of this life assures us that an actual, and long experience has proved no human being too degraded to be raised, and raised to great heights, by the influences of the Gospel of Christ Jesus. Dare we then take the responsibility of restricting that Gospel to any part of the earth? Dare we with-hold it from the basest of mankind?

Again, we must, in looking over the great achievements of Dr. Moffat, be impressed with the fact that one consecrated man *and God* make a mighty host to oppose the forces of evil. The several times we found Dr. Moffat struggling almost alone, if not quite so, with the work of the Kuruman mission, the limits of human vision had shut God out of sight, but He was there by his side, as He would not have been to help a less consecrated man.

XXXI.

SOUTH AFRICA OF TO-DAY—MISSIONS THERE—PRAYERS THUS ANSWERED —NO TIME FOR RESTING YET.

BEFORE closing this brief memoir shall we not take a hasty survey of the South Africa of to-day? A modern map would not give names, or boundaries as they were seventy years ago. Namaqualand you will find; so Griqualand—not town; and Bechwanaland; but the latter much smaller than in Dr. Moffat's day; because much of it has been included in the Transvaal, or South African Republic. Kuruman Station is still there;—yet the center of missionary enterprises; but one must go far into the interior to find people like those who surrounded it when Dr. Moffat first went there.

In Bechwanaland, and Kaffirland, the London Missionary Society still continues its work; reporting, in 1885, thirteen white missionaries, seventy-one native preachers, about five thousand adherents, thirty schools, with nearly, if not quite, one thousand one hundred and eighty-seven scholars. The seed sown by Dr. Moffat has sprung up, and is bearing a hundred fold.

Beside the London Society, the Scotch, German, French, Moravian, and Methodist societies have dotted all the southern portion of Africa with mission stations. Among the Zulus the American Board has long had its missionaries. Thus are Robert Moffat's prayers for South Africa being answered.

A journey to the Kuruman from Cape Colony, to-day, would take you over well laid roads; there would be no

fording of rivers, or being rafted over them, for well constructed bridges, one magnificent iron one over the Orange river, would lay in your way, and where once the lion roamed in bold freedom, you would find neat towns; nor would your eyes be shocked by the sight of naked warriors or shameless women. You would find the land abounding in peace and plenty, and the light of the "son of righteousness" shining in many places as brightly as on the American continent, and all this largely due to missionary work done there long ago. Oh, blind worldling, to put one straw in the way of foreign missions when their results bring you such benefits!

But Ethiopia is not done stretching out her hands to us yet. Her interior is packed with souls perishing without a knowledge of Christ, whose teachings have made fair other portions of her land, and how can they know of Christ, unless hundreds of consecrated men and women go to teach them, and how can such go unless we send, or aid in sending them.

END.

For the information contained in this memoir,—the writer is largely indebted to Dr. Moffat's own work, "Labors and Scenes in South Africa," which gives a history of early missionary work there, as well as of his own labors, the country and people up to his visit to England in 1838.

The writer also acknowledges the aid received from the memoir of his parents, written by John S. Moffat. Also that from several missionary magazines, as well as that from several newspaper articles.

M. L. WILDER.

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